

# **VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE MEDIA RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
December 8, 2003**

**FOR INFORMATION CONTACT  
Jonathan Lesser, Director for  
Regulated Utility Planning, 802/828-4006**

## **DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE ISSUES FINAL DRAFT OF 2004 COMPREHENSIVE ENERGY AND ELECTRIC PLAN**

Montpelier, VT— The Vermont Department of Public Service today issued for public review and comment the *2004 Vermont Comprehensive Energy And Electric Plan -- Final Draft*. Vermont law since 1983 has required the Department to develop electric and energy plans for the state that account for “public health and safety,” “preservation of environmental quality,” and “the potential for reductions of electrical demand through conservation,” and that meet Vermont's energy needs in a way that is “adequate, reliable, secure, affordable, efficient, and environmentally sound.”

“This Twenty Year Plan recognizes that we need the tools to make good energy decisions in the face of increasing uncertainty in energy markets,” said DPS Commissioner David O’Brien. “While we can’t eliminate market volatility, we can make sure that we factor in that volatility as best we can. Vermont will face critical energy decisions in the next twenty years, with the expiration of Vermont Yankee’s operating license in 2012, and the end of the Hydro-Quebec contracts starting in 2015. Today, we don’t know what the best solutions will be, but we need to begin laying the foundation to prepare ourselves for making tough decisions in the future.”

-more-

In the past, the *Twenty-Year Electric Plan* and the *Comprehensive Energy Plan* were separate publications. They have been combined this year into one overall planning document that recognizes the strong influence of the electric industry on overall energy policy. The plan addresses major energy issues that are likely to face the state over the next twenty years, and addresses issues such as reducing electric rates and comprehensively addressing the volatility of energy markets today. Other issues include increasing the value that energy efficiency programs provide to ratepayers, developing rate design structures that encourage new jobs, expanding natural gas service to more areas of the state, and promoting renewable energy.

The goal of the *2004 Comprehensive Energy and Electric Plan* ("Plan") is to establish a structured decision-making process that recognizes and responds to the uncertainty confronting utilities, planners, and regulators," said Jonathan Lesser, DPS Director for Regulated Utility Planning. "We must all make decisions in the face of limited information and uncertainty. This can be especially problematic when addressing large and long-lived capital investments such as electric generating plants. That does not mean such investments should be avoided; rather, it means they need to be evaluated in a manner that recognizes and addresses those uncertainties comprehensively," he said.

The plan is posted on the department's web site at [www.state.vt.us/psd/plan.htm](http://www.state.vt.us/psd/plan.htm) and will be available at regional planning commissions, regional libraries and on request from the Department. The Department will hold public hearings on the Final Draft of the **2004 Vermont Comprehensive Energy And Electric Plan**. The dates and locations of these hearings will be announced soon. Information about hearings will be available on the Department's Web site or by calling 802 828-2811 via electronic mail to [vtdps@psd.state.vt.us](mailto:vtdps@psd.state.vt.us) , or by writing to the Department of Public Service, 112 State Street, Drawer 20, Montpelier, VT 05620-2601. Comments are always welcome.

- 30 -